

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



Board of Directors

Chair, Mike Callaghan, Firewise Community (18)

Vice Chair, Don Gasser, Citizen (18)

Sec/Treasurer, Mike De Lasaux,

UC Cooperative Extension (18)

Chuck Bowman, Firewise Community (17)

Jim Hamblin, PC Fire Chiefs Assoc. (17)

Shane Vargas, CAL FIRE (18)

Dan Martynn, NRCS (18)

Julie Ruiz, NSAQMD (18)

Ryan Bauer, USFS (18)

Mission Statement:

“To reduce the loss of natural and human made resources caused by wildfire through Firewise Community programs and pre-fire activities.”

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 14th, 2017 - 9:00 am.

Plumas County Planning & Building Services Conference Room

555 Main Street, Quincy, CA

1. Welcome & Introductions – Mike Callaghan
2. Review Agenda – no changes
3. Approve Meeting Minutes – **m – Bowman, s – Gasser**
4. Public Comment – Chet Burgess of Professional Slash Busting Services introduced himself and his company. They are based out of Blairsden and provide mastication, grapple piling, hand-thinning and piling.

New Business - none

Old Business

1. Nominations for Directors to the PC FSC Board – Chuck Bowman

The two board members with expiring terms, Chuck Bowman and Jim Hamblin, will both run again. However, neither of them can commit to the full two-year term. John Reynolds is the only new candidate that has been identified.

It is desirable to expand the exposure of the Board. Mr. Bowman has approached the Realtors' Association and the Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association for nominees, but there has been no commitment at this point. It would also be valuable to have an insurance representative involved.

Mike De Lasaux announced that he is retiring in June. He will discontinue his role with the PCFSC Board effective the end of this year. Mr. De Lasaux will continue to attend meetings until his retirement. He is a charter member and retains much of the institutional knowledge for the Council.

2. Landowner Contributions, Donations, and Membership – Hannah Hepner

Landowner contributions total \$49,368. Of those funds, \$1,407 is committed to the Senior/Disabled Defensible Space program. About \$5,000 is yet to be expensed to the Hwy 70 project. The remainder of the funds are available for reinvestment.

Mike De Lasaux asked to clarify the policy for using landowner funds. He said the idea was for those funds to remain in the community from which they were collected. He noted that that doesn't work if there are no additional interested landowners. At the Community Fuel Treatment Maintenance Workshop Committee meeting it will be discussed whether these funds can/should be used to provide maintenance for previous HFR participants.

There is now a donation button on the PCFSC website. One \$50 donation has been received. A letter was sent to all of the Chipping Program participants to let them know that they can make a donation in lieu of being charged for additional material. Donations to the PCFSC are tax deductible.

Membership materials from the Butte Fire Safe Council were shared. For a donation members become a "Wildfire Safe Neighbor." The Butte Fire Safe Council is considering offering incentives for membership including bumper stickers, t-shirts, membership cards, and social invitations. Additionally, the Butte Fires Safe Council holds separate informational meetings for its Wildfire Safe Neighbors. A presentation by the Butte Fire Safe Council Executive Director was requested.

Don Gordon advised not to overshadow the work of individual Firewise communities with a membership program. Mike De Lasaux said that the PCFSC is the entity that has pursued grants and implemented projects on behalf of these communities and that there is the need to continue to support Firewise communities in the absence of Title III funds. There is also a need for the PCFSC to find a mechanism to be self-sustainable.

3. Community Fuel Treatment Maintenance Workshop Committee meeting to be held after the PCFSC meeting

Updates

1. Status of Current Grants – Hannah Hepner & Project Managers

262 – Feather River Stewardship Coalition: The group met in November. Grant applications submitted for Butterfly Twain and Little Grass Valley Reservoir.

275 – Senior/Disabled Defensible Space: The recent fires are impacting the demand for services. There could be an opportunity to utilize Community Connections (time banking) to advance the program.

278 – Chipping Program: In its first year the chipping program contracted \$32,410 to chipping operators (25.5% of the budget) and used 78% of the program manager budget. Line items will need to be adjusted to take into account that the manager will need to solicit increased participation in 2018 in order to utilize the remaining operator funds. It was discussed whether PCFSC should take chips to the Loyaltan biomass facility or if that is the responsibility of the LTO. Captain Shane Vargas said that he has already been receiving calls

about defensible space inspections and he would encourage the Senior/Disabled Defensible Space and Chipping Programs to get started early this year.

259 – Barry Creek: Project is complete with 59.4 acres (of a planned 555) treated.

East Quincy: Project is complete with 92 acres treated.

East Shore: Project is complete with 9.8 acres treated.

C-Road: Layout is almost complete – approximately 65 acres identified for treatment.

260 – Hwy 70: The final report and invoice have been submitted.

273- Dixie Valley: The Environmental Assessment has been submitted and a Decision from the Forest Supervisor is expected in late January. A contractor Request for Proposals was issued on December 11th and bids are due January 15th. A bid tour will be held December 20th.

277- Wolf/Grizzly: Imperial have halted operations until spring.

280 - Bucks Lake: The contract packet is nearly complete. The Forest Service is using 8A to contract with Imperial.

279 - Mohawk Vista: Layout will begin after C-Road.

281 – Gold Mountain: The forester had a tour with Mike Callaghan to evaluate treatment areas.

2 & 3. Status of Potential Projects/Grant Opportunities – Hannah Hepner

Meadow Valley – 189.8 acres of Soper Wheeler property in Spanish Ranch have been proposed for underburning. An additional 232.1 acres of adjacent Forest Service property have been identified for potential treatment. A Good Neighbor Authority/Wyden Act agreement was suggested. It was asked if other private landowners in Meadow Valley could be included in the project. Chief Gordon said that CAL FIRE would like to see additional landowners included and that CAL FIRE would support that aspect.

Indian Falls – Dave Kinatader has evaluated the potential for a project around the community of Indian Falls and sees timber and fuel opportunities. It was determined that the PCFSC's past treatments in the area should be evaluated for maintenance needs.

Boyle Ravine – Is an Audubon initiated project on Quincy Community Services District owned land. More details to come.

USFS Stevens funds – submitted April 14

C Road - 90 acres, \$180,570

Grizzly Ranch – 130 acres, \$270,275

American Valley Phase II – 100 acres, \$285,970

Genesee Woods/Red Clover – 100 acres, \$178,970 (2019 Stevens funds)

Plumas RAC Title II – submitted August 11

Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance Program - \$65,300: **selected for award**

PCFSC Coordination – six months, \$27,500: **selected for award**

SNC Prop 1 – submitted November 1st

Little Grass Valley Reservoir Watershed Protection Project – 480 acres, \$500,000

Butterfly Twain Fuels and Forest Health Project – 455 acres, \$500,000

CAL FIRE Cap & Trade grant program announcement should come by the end of the month

4. Standing Reports and Discussion

- **Plumas County Tree Mortality Task Force (TMTF):** Updated areal flight information has been released. There are an additional 27 million trees dead in California, bringing the total to 129 million since 2014. The data does not specify information for Plumas County or Plumas National Forest and has not yet been included in the [Tree Mortality Viewer](#). From the available information, it appears that there is increasing mortality in central and eastern Plumas County. Chief Gordon said that the pace is slowing but there is now concern over the safety hazards caused by the original dead trees. Over a million trees have been removed so far. If this winter doesn't improve soon, we'll be back in a drought condition. The State TMTF is beginning to acknowledge the role of stand density. Mike Callaghan noted that we could be seeing developments that require the Plumas TMTF. David Popp suggested that the Fire Safe Council adjust prescriptions to reduce density even further to account for long-term droughts.
- **Plumas County Office of Emergency Services (OES):** Sue McCourt attended the Fire Chiefs meeting over the weekend. Plumas County is still supporting the fires in Southern California. Mrs. McCourt reported that the Plumas County Sheriff had 400 fire calls during the Minerva fire. Soon residents will be able to make reports by texting 911. It is anticipated that we will have better cell coverage over the next few years. She emphasized the need to sign up for CodeRed. 5,000 people in the county are currently signed up. There is information coming from the recent fires about insurance issues. There is a \$180 billion dollar loss estimated in Napa. 97% of people interviewed were underinsured. Contents replacement and building code upgrades are insurance plan add-ons. Insurance cancellations and premium increases are anticipated. Being a Firewise community may make a difference, but there is no standardization among insurance companies. Consider reviewing your insurance during the winter and inventorying everything in your home. The November State TMTF notes say that The Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety, an industry funded research group and CAL FIRE have met, collaborated, and are developing the scientific/technical information to support a Tiered Risk Management Approach to reducing risk for property owners. The subgroup has started the discussion to explore a potential revision to PRC 4291 that would strengthen overall fire mitigation measures at the individual property level.
- **CAL FIRE:** Chief Don Gordon said that during the Napa and Sonoma fires emergency services were receiving 3,300 calls per hour and were quickly overwhelmed. Mendocino lost all 911 communication capabilities. Officials in Southern California texted 22 million people to prepare for evacuation. There is a big push for rapid re-population after evacuation, which led to some residents being evacuated three times. The fire season is three months longer than it was in the 1960s. The Coffee Fire burned down things that "weren't supposed to burn" – like large shopping centers. There is clear information that ember cast is the issue more than the fire front.
LMU's 10-person fuels crew is available to Plumas County throughout the winter.
Chief Gordon announced that he has accepted the position of Assistant Deputy Director, Cooperative Fire, Training, Safety, EMS, and R&D in Sacramento. This is his last PCFSC meeting.
- **USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction:** Dave Kinatader said that it has been an active timber sale year. There has been activity at Bucks Lake and Round Valley. There is focus on the Moonlight fire before funds are gone. The Butterfly timber sale is ready and there is a service contract for a portion of the WUI. The next big initiative is the Middle Fork project – a 65,000-70,000 acre planning project.

- **Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District:** not present
- **Firewise Communities:**
 - Lake Almanor West** – not present
 - Graeagle** – Firewise renewal is complete
 - Gold Mountain** – Had a meeting with the CSD’s new Fire Coordinator Manager, Judy Clot
 - LACC** – not present
 - Grizzly Ranch** – not present
 - Plumas Eureka** – not present
 - Sloat/Cromberg/Camp Layman** – No update
 - Gallepii** – not present
 - Portola**- Has three projects to implement
- **Industry Representatives** – Cade Mohler of Sierra Pacific Industries said that they have 1,000 acres in Plumas County planned with a fuel break prescription. The work will mostly be in the Almanor Basin and around Clio. The treatment areas are close to communities. SPI’s work along Hwy 36, east of Chester, was commended by meeting attendees.
- **Tribal Representatives** - Ben Cunningham said that a PG&E land donation should be complete in 2018. Trina Cunningham outlined toxicity issues associated with illegal cannabis cultivation, particularly for law enforcement, Forest Service staff, and the food chain. She is working with various groups to create a constant presence on the land, which includes staggering timber sales on any given project. She has also been advocating for State investment in headwaters communities.

6. Other Updates & Upcoming Events:

[2018 Wildland Urban Interface Conference](#) in Reno, February 27-March 1st

[Cultural Competency Workshop](#) in Quincy, January 25th 9:00am-4:30pm

Adjourned - Next meeting January 11th, 2017